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CSRlive Commentary

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Hat Trick for VODAFONE, NOVO NORDISK and COCA COLA!!!

VODAFONE wins first place for BEST REPORT for the third year running in the CRRA '10 CSR Report Awards, and an overview of other results.

By CSRwire contributing writer Elaine Cohen

Amidst great fanfare, anticipation and excitement, marred only by the effects of volcanic ash endangering flights in European airspace, preventing the arrival of several guests, including, most regrettably, myself, the CRRA '10 Award results were announced at an invite-only Gala Evening for the Who's Who of worldwide Corporate Sustainability, hosted by [CorporateRegister.com](#), the CSR resource website and world's largest online directory of CSR and Sustainability Reports. **Vodafone**, who has demonstrated consistent commitment and skill in reporting over the years, using their "We Said, We Have, We Will" signature format introduced with their 2004 report, achieved first place as the Best Report for the third consecutive year.



The highly regarded CRRA '10 was an invitation to 130 out of more than 3,000 reports published between September 2008 and September 2009 to compete for the ultimate accolade. CRRA (Corporate Register Report Awards) is the only online annual reporting awards, and in the words of Managing Director, Paul Scott, "CRRA represents an important event in the Annual Reporting calendar because CR reporting is growing fast across sectors and countries all around the world, and this annual event provides a focal point for the global CR community to look at new reporting developments and establish best reporting practice."

Close to 7,000 individual valid votes (each voter could vote for up to 5 reports, in order of preference) were placed this year, with broad participation from all sectors and countries around the world, with the largest voter category being corporate CSR professionals. This level of voting is 40% more than last year, demonstrating increasing interest in this annual event, which has apparently hit on a winning formula, with the same categories and process holding good for the third year running. Voters may not vote for their own Company reports, enhancing the credibility of the overall result.

The winners and runners-up in all nine categories are:

- **Best Report: Vodafone Group plc - Corporate Responsibility Report for the year ended 31 March 2009 (Runners-Up: BP and Co-Operative Group)**
- **Best First Time Report: The Walt Disney Company - 2008 Corporate Responsibility Report (Runners-Up: Brasil Foods and 888 Holdings)**
- **Best SME Report: RecycleBank LLC - 2008-Second Nature. Reporting on Corporate Social Responsibility (Runners-Up:**

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- **Best Integrated Report: Novo Nordisk - 2008 Annual Report (Runners-Up: BASF and Veolia Environment)**
- **Best Carbon Disclosure: Hewlett-Packard Company - Global Citizenship Report 2008 (Runners-Up: BMW and Royal Dutch Shell)**
- **Best Creativity in Communications: Coca-Cola Enterprises Inc - 2008 Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability (CRS) Report (Runners-Up: Walt Disney Company and General Electric Company)**
- **Best Relevance & Materiality: Vodafone Group - Corporate Responsibility Report for the year ended 31 March 2009 (Runners-Up: Volkswagen and BP)**
- **Best Openness & Honesty: Virgin Media Inc - Our responsibility report 2009 (Runners-Up: BP and Co-Operative Group)**
- **Best Credibility through Assurance: Banco Bradesco - 2008 Sustainability Report (assured by BSD Ltda Brazil and PWC Brazil) (Runners-Up: Volkswagen and Vodafone)**

Eight reports achieved first place across nine categories (**Vodafone** took Best Report and Best Relevance). Of these eight reports, seven were written according to the **GRI Framework** (**Virgin Media** did not adopt the GRI), and six declared a GRI Report Application Level (**RecycleBank** did not). Of the six who declared a level, two were at A level, three at B level and one at C level. The eight winning reports contained 699 pages of sustainability information, the longest being 147 pages (**Banco Bradesco**) and the shortest, 47 pages (**Coca Cola Enterprises**). All first place winners came from only four countries (USA, 5; UK, 1; Brazil, 1; Denmark, 1) and only three of the top eight reports were assured (**Vodafone**, **Novo Nordisk** and **Banco Bradesco**). The winning reports are spread across business sectors, with no sector taking a significant lead. Commiserations to the reporting team at **BP**, who came close four times in 2nd, 3rd and 4th places, but didn't quite make it to first place in any category.

In reviewing CRRAs results over the last three years, we can observe that many of the same names crop up year after year. In addition to **Vodafone's** hat trick, **Coca Cola** is a third consecutive winner in the Best Creativity category, and **Novo Nordisk** is a third consecutive winner in the Best Integrated Report category. **Virgin Media** won the best First Report in 2009. In fact, across three years of awards, only fifteen companies made the grade as Number One in one category or more. **BP** achieved nine first, second or third places in three years and **Vodafone** achieved seven, **Royal Dutch Shell** has been within the top three places five times in three years and **Coca Cola**, four. I believe this tells us something about the value of these Awards to reporters. Reporters are deliberately coming back year after year, using this highly visible and reputable online platform to expand the reach and visibility of their reporting and their reputation. Those achieving multiple top rankings tend to enter multiple categories, thereby increasing their chances of securing a prize. There is no guarantee of winning as the voting is entirely electronic and, after the initial cap of 130 entries, the multi-sector stakeholder public decides. It is not by chance that those reporters who are consistently strong, clear and focused in their reporting stand out from the crowd time and time again. It doesn't appear to be the length of the report, or even the degree of transparency as defined by the GRI Framework which dictates what people are prepared to vote on as representing the best. The winning formula relies on clarity regarding the Company's sustainability strategy and performance, and precision in the way these are reflected. In addition, I suspect, the five C's of CorporateRegister.com's report assessment framework: **Content, Communication, Credibility, Commitment and Comparability** are also worth some attention.

Congratulations to all the winners and to all those taking part!

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